

of the book to the various technical elements the author explores.

What the book is missing is the tension between developers of the different approaches within the various areas Cooper examines. The length of time and struggle to get from concept to implemented innovation would be interesting to investigate. Neither are the political debates and forces for change in safety aboard ship explored, a missed opportunity that could be someone's dissertation. He does occasionally mention legislation, ranging from 1852 through to the twentieth century, but any discussion of the struggle to get that legislation passed and to improve it is omitted.

Cooper has assembled a mass of information on the development and improvement of technologies to make sailors more comfortable and safer. The book's encyclopedic nature will make it a good reference for those interested in the evolution of life aboard ship in the modern era.

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Tom Cooper, Sirous Ebrahimi, and E.R. Hooton. *Iran-Iraq Naval War Volume 2: Convoy Battles 1981-1984*. Middle East @ War No. 63. Warwick, UK: Helion, www.helion.co.uk, 2024. 72 pp., illustrations, maps, biography, notes. UK £19.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-915070-80-7.

This work is the second installment of Tom Cooper, Sirous Ebrahimi, and E.R. Hooton's study into the often-overlooked naval side of the Iran-Iraq War of 1980 to 1988. Along with the four-volume study of ground operations previously produced by Cooper, Hooton, and Farzin Nadimi, this text seeks to shed light on the reality of the "Tanker War" and examine the many firsts of modern warfare seen during this dedicated assault on national import/export infrastructure. Divided into four chapters, the work uses unprecedented access to Iranian state archives alongside interviews and period photographs to build its narrative and analysis, with new map renderings and color profile illustrations of both aircraft and surface vessels provided to further understanding. Sources and notes are provided at the end as well for those seeking to carry out their own examinations.

In the pages leading to the Introduction there are a few points of note, mainly a map of the region to give a basic understanding of the discussed area, an explanation for the Romanized naming conventions used throughout the text, and a guide to common abbreviations found in the work. This is followed by a summation of sources and a basic outline of the war's initial moves, which led to the development of Iran's "Caravan" convoy system and the covert purchasing of American aviation materials and foreign oil to keep the nation afloat during wartime. The relatively calm period of early 1981 is

covered fairly quickly, with the work hitting its stride in Chapter Two.

The early deployment of the French-designed AM.39 Exocet missile by Iraqi air assets in 1981 is covered in detail and bolstered by a detail page on the weapon itself. Coverage of key engagements and ship losses often includes translations from Iranian sources, with maps used to show convoy routes and key airbases throughout. Iraqi overconfidence in their newly acquired French and Soviet airframes is examined, with the lack of air superiority being noted as leading to the “first clear-cut Iraqi defeat in this war” (28). Losses on both sides during the “Year of the Caravans” is covered with a relatively high level of detail, with the authors detailing many ship losses and nearly averted catastrophes when attacks almost set off nearby explosives and fuel. This section also contains detail inserts on Iraqi-flown SE.3200 Frelons and Iranian attempts to counter Exocets with floating missile decoys, as well as an impressive collection of color profiles of key naval and air assets for both sides. Iranian statistics for convoys and losses from 21 March 1981 to 8 January 1983 are provided to lead up to the evolution of warfare in 1983, with the implementation of heavily armed convoys, changes to Iraqi leadership allowing for better combined arms approaches, and the Iraqi deployment of Super Etendard anti-ship missiles concluding the volume.

In terms of possible improvements to the volume, a few come to mind. While most of the maps do have scales, two maps detailing the approaches to Khowr al-Moussa do not (20, 35). The colour ship and aircraft profiles also lack scales, and the addition of such features would both improve the uniformity of the maps and the effective visualization of the profiles. Finally, a simplified chronology might be useful to include as a quick reference, listing key convoys, losses, and weapon introductions free from the overall analysis. These are mere suggestions for future editions or a likely compendium upon the completion of the multi-volume work, and their absence does not detract from Cooper, Hooton, and Nadimi’s current text.

All in all, *Iran-Iraq Naval War Volume 2* is a solid English-language resource for an often ignored or oversimplified aspect of the devastating Iran-Iraq War. The unprecedented access to Iranian documentation and the interviews of Iraqi sources conducted by the authors offers a level of detail and understanding not previously possible for Western academics, allowing for the work to function both as a primer on the subject and a valuable citable resource at the same time. Modelers may also find the color profiles and photographs useful in recreating examples of combatant vessels and vehicles, allowing even more to learn from this work.

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